

To Whom It May Concern,

I have read the European Commission Green Paper on a European Citizen's Initiative with pleasure and have considered the issues raised and the questions posed.

1. Minimum Number of Member States from which citizens must come.

I believe that a threshold of a majority of member states is too high. The effect of this would be too defeat the object of making the process accessible to citizens. I would therefore suggest that a threshold of one third of member states would be sufficient. To conclude I believe that one third of member states would constitute a "significant number of Member States" as required by the Treaty.

Please also consider a much lower threshold. I would suggest a threshold of no more than three Member States to ensure that the Citizens' Initiative is accessible regardless of location.

2. Minimum Number of Signatories Per Member State.

I would suggest that 0.2% of the population of each Member State where signatures are collected could be taken as the minimum number of citizens required for that State. This has the advantage of consistency with the one million citizens comprising 0.2% of the population of the EU.

3. Eligibility to support a Citizens' Initiative - Minimum Age

I believe that the minimum age required to support a citizens' initiative be linked to the voting age for the European Parliament elections in each Member State. This has both the advantages of simplicity and consistency with no significant administrative burden.

4. Form and wording of a citizens' initiative.

I strongly believe it is not only sufficient and appropriate but also very important that an initiative ONLY requires the subject-matter and objectives of the proposal on which the Commission is invited to act. Any requirement for a draft legal act is indeed unnecessarily restrictive and burdensome. The form and wording required should be AS EASY AS POSSIBLE AND FREE FROM JARGON AND COMPLICATED LEGAL LANGUAGE.

5. Requirements for the Collection, Verification and Authentication of Signatures

I strongly believe the best option would be to set a number of basic provisions at EU level, including certain minimum requirements for the above and obligations on Member States to facilitate the collection process and remove unduly restrictive requirements. This would have the advantage of consistency and flexibility.

I strongly believe that the European-wide nature of the citizens' initiative be enhanced by facilitating the simultaneous collection of signatures in several Member States. For this purpose I believe it is CRUCIAL that ONLINE TOOLS SUCH AS EMAIL AND TEXT MESSAGES CAN BE USED TO SIGN PETITIONS.

I understand that most EU countries have a Register of Voters and where they live. This register could be checked for authenticity. A secure connection and electronic verification and authentication would be needed in case of online collection of signatures.

6. Time limit for the collection of signatures

A time limit for the collection of signatures should be fixed and I think one year would be an appropriate time limit.

7. Registration of Proposed Initiatives

I believe it is absolutely crucial for a form of Registration of the proposed initiative be required before the collection of signatures begins. I am of the opinion that an admissibility check be made and the initiative declared admissible or not before the initiative is registered.

I agree that the initiatives registered could be listed on a specific website provided by the European Commission.

#### 8. Requirement for organisers - Transparency and funding

I believe that the organisers of an initiative can be either individual citizens or organisation. I strongly believe that only basic information should be provided including details on funding and the type of organisations which support or launch and initiative.

#### 9. Examination by the Commission

I believe a time limit of 2 months be set for the verification of the representativeness of an initiative. I also believe that a maximum time limit of 3 further months should be set for the examination of the initiative and to decide a response.

**I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE COMMISSION BE REQUIRED TO PROPOSE NEW LEGISLATION ON ANY ADMISSABLE PETITION WITHIN THE ABOVE TIME FRAME..**

#### 10. Initiatives on the same issue

**I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR RULES TO BE INTRODUCED TO PREVENT THE SUCCESSIVE PRESENTATION OF CITIZENS' INITIATIVES ON THE SAME ISSUE UNLESS THE COMMISSION IS REQUIRED TO RESPOND TO THE INITIATIVE WITH A PROPOSAL/LEGISLATION.**

From: Mr John Daniel Grimes